

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A stainless steel comprising a composition (in weight-%):

Carbon max 0.1

Nitrogen max 0.1

Copper 0.5 - 4

Chromium 10 - 14

Molybdenum 0.5 - 6

Nickel 7 - 11

Cobalt 0 - 9

Tantalum max 0.1

Niobium max 0.1

Vanadium max 0.1

Tungsten max 0.1

Aluminum 0.05 - 0.6

Titanium 0.4 - 1.4

Silicon max 0.7

Manganese \leq 1.0

Iron balance and

normally occurring usual steelmaking additions and impurities, wherein said stainless steel having been [[after]] nitriding to exhibit [[exhibits]] a hardened surface layer with a hardness of at least 1200 Hv.

Claims 2-5 (Canceled)

6. (Previously Presented) The stainless steel according to claim 1, wherein the stainless steel includes quasicrystalline particles in a martensitic microstructure.

7. (Previously Presented) The stainless steel according to claim 6, wherein the quasicrystalline particles in the martensitic microstructure are a result of a precipitation hardening process.

8. (Previously Presented) The stainless steel according to claim 1, wherein a hardness at a surface of the stainless steel is at least twice that of a hardness of at 0.5 mm into a matrix of the stainless steel.

9. (Previously Presented) The stainless steel according to claim 1, wherein the hardened surface layer has a thickness of about 0.5 mm.

10. (Previously Presented) The stainless steel according to claim 1, wherein the stainless steel is formed into one or more of a wire, a plate, a strip, tube and a pipe.

11. (Previously Presented) The stainless steel according to claim 1, wherein the stainless steel is formed into a complex geometry for use in an application with a high demand on a combination of high strength and/or toughness and wear resistance.

12. (Previously Presented) The stainless steel according to claim 11, wherein the complex geometry is a wear part of an engine, an engine component, or an impact load.

13. (Previously Presented) The stainless steel according to claim 11, wherein the complex geometry is a cam follower, a cam follower pad, a valve stem, a valve stem guide, a piston pin, a piston shaft, a hydraulic piston, an ejector pin, a safety protection plate, a lock cylinder and other locking devices, a blocking element, or a thief-proof equipment

14. (Previously Presented) A material comprising a wear resistant coating deposited on the stainless steel according to claim 1.

15. (Previously Presented) A method for making a surface modified stainless steel, the method comprising:

subjecting a stainless steel to a nitriding process at a temperature of 450 to 580°C for a time period of 1 to 40 hours in a plasma nitriding atmosphere, the stainless steel having a composition comprising:

Carbon max 0.1

Nitrogen max 0.1

Copper 0.5 to 4

Chromium 10 to 14

Molybdenum 0.5 to 6

Nickel 7 to 11

Cobalt 0 to 9

Tantalum max 0.1

Niobium max 0.1

Vanadium max 0.1

Tungsten max 0.1

Aluminum 0.05 to 0.6

Titanium 0.4 to 1.4

Silicon max 0.7

Manganese \leq 1.0

Iron balance and

normally occurring usual steelmaking additions and impurities.

16. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 15, wherein said stainless steel after nitriding exhibits a hardened surface layer with a hardness of at least 1200 Hv.

17. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 15, wherein the surface modified stainless steel does not change dimension from the nitriding process.